
CANCER FACTS

National Cancer Institute • National Institutes of Health

Food Additives

Food additives are chemicals that help preserve, color, and flavor food. Preservation is essential because food grown in one part of the world is often shipped to consumers thousands of miles away and eaten weeks or months after being packaged.

Nearly 15,000 substances are added to the foods we eat during their growth, processing, and packaging. These additives are subjected to extremely careful laboratory screening before they are used, and scientists believe it is unlikely that they contribute significantly to the overall cancer risk in humans. Information about food additives is available from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition, Direct Additives Branch, 200 C Street SW, Washington, DC 20204; the telephone number is 202-205-4314. For further information, you can visit the Food and Drug Administration at <http://www.fda.gov> on the Internet.

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Sources of National Cancer Institute Information

Cancer Information Service

Toll-free: 1-800-4-CANCER (1-800-422-6237)

TTY(for deaf and hard of hearing callers): 1-800-332-8615

NCI Online

Internet

Use <http://www.cancer.gov> to reach NCI's Web site.

CancerMail Service

To obtain a contents list, send e-mail to cancermail@icicc.nci.nih.gov with the word "help" in the body of the message.

CancerFax® fax on demand service

Dial 301-402-5874 and listen to recorded instructions.

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